

# WD News & Notes

The Newsletter of the  
Moravian Church,  
Western District  
December 2016

Rev. Bruce Nelson, President • 221 E. Mills Drive, Lake Mills WI, 53551 • 920-253-9030 • [www.Moravian.org](http://www.Moravian.org)

## Unity Prayer Watch

The Unity Prayer Watch is designed to have at least one Moravian somewhere in the world constantly in prayer! The churches of the Western District have been assigned **December 22<sup>nd</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>**. Your church's date is listed below. More information is available in your local church office.

- Dec 22 Hope and West Salem
- Dec 23 Grace and Unionville
- Dec 24 Ebenezer, Lake Mills, and Watertown
- Dec 25 Veedum and Wisconsin Rapids
- Dec 26 Ephraim, Sister Bay, and Sturgeon Bay
- Dec 27 Christian Faith, London, Glenwood, and Lakeview
- Dec 28 Daggett, Freedom, and West Side
- Dec 29 Bethel, Goshen, Canaan, and Shepherd of the Prairie
- Dec 30 Chaska, Waconia, Lake Auburn, and Christ's Community
- Dec 31 Berea, Our Savior's, Downey, Morongo, and Main Street

## Ordination Anniversaries

- 1<sup>st</sup> Amy Gohdes-Luhman (20 years)
- 27<sup>th</sup> Aden Ward (46 years)
- 27<sup>th</sup> Staci Marrese-Wheeler (24 years)

## Church Anniversaries

- 4<sup>th</sup> Berea (142 years)
- 21<sup>st</sup> Lake Mills (160 years)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Freedom (150 years)

## Healthy Congregations

The Healthy Congregations Task Force is exploring ways to foster congregational health through a newsletter, surveys, and a variety of opportunities and resources. Visit them at [healthymoraviancongregations.wordpress.com](http://healthymoraviancongregations.wordpress.com). To get their newsletter, email [healthiermoraviancongregation@gmail.com](mailto:healthiermoraviancongregation@gmail.com).

December's "**Resource of the Month**" is a rotation workshop shared by the Sturgeon Bay Moravian Church. Go to the website above and search "rotation fellowship."

## District Clergy Retreat

The annual Western District Clergy Retreat will be held on **January 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>** at Mt. Morris Camp and Conference Center. Our program will be centered on preaching and public address. Our speaker will be Rev. Greg Renstrom, a retired Methodist pastor who served congregations in Michigan and Minnesota, and also as President of the Minnesota Council of Churches. In addition he has worked for more than 35 years with AA and helped create "The Fosdick Lectures in Preaching" at Augsburg College. He is an active participant in various social and community agencies and continues to speak and preach at churches, treatment centers, and AA meetings. Registration forms have been sent out. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Mary Lou Plummer.

## News from Mt. Morris

Mt. Morris Camp and Conference Center will be looking for a new executive director. **Joel Jarvis** has announced he will retire on **March 31<sup>st</sup>**. We are very grateful for his years of service! The Mt. Morris Board has begun the process to hire a new executive director and will formally post the job opportunity in January. Any questions regarding the position can be directed to the chair of the Personnel Committee, Ms. Linda Lippens (920) 253-8137.

## Tricklebee Grand Opening

The Tricklebee Café in Milwaukee, WI will celebrate its Grand Opening on **December 14<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am** with a Ribbon Cutting, followed by lunch, kids' activities, and live music. Pastor Christie Melby-Gibbons rejoices that they have remodeled their space, passed all inspections, and are ready to share God's love and wholesome food with their neighbors. If you are able, join the celebration; otherwise, please hold them all in prayer. Check them out on Facebook!

## The Call Process

Please hold the **Morongo, West Salem, and Lake Mills** congregations in your prayers as they work in the Call Process to seek pastoral leadership.

The District Board continues to be grateful for the leadership of the Joint Boards of **Main Street, Grace, and Downey** as they lead their congregations.

### *Prayer Concerns*

We extend our prayers and sympathy to Br. Kurt Liebenow, pastor of the Watertown Moravian Church in Watertown, WI upon the death of his father, Dr. **Roland Liebenow**, December 2 in Lake Mills, WI. You may recall that Kurt's mother, Martha, passed away in June of this year. We also extend our sympathy to Kurt's brother, former Moravian pastor, Br. Mark Liebenow.

### *Downey Congregation to Close*

With profound thanksgiving for its faithful ministry, the Provincial Elders' Conference accepted the request of the **Downey Moravian Church** in Downey, CA and the recommendation of the Western District Executive Board to close the congregation, with final worship service to be held on Pentecost – **June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017**. June 6<sup>th</sup> marks the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the congregation. Please be in prayer for the members of the congregation as they bring to a close a ministry that has touched many lives through the decades, and as they discern how God is leading them to continue their Food Ministry to their neighbors.

### *Clergy and Spouse Birthdays*

6<sup>th</sup> Nan Nelson  
13<sup>th</sup> Bruce Nelson  
19<sup>th</sup> Jon Gehler  
23<sup>rd</sup> Mildred Schulze  
25<sup>th</sup> Alice Sautebin  
28<sup>th</sup> John McCarthy  
28<sup>th</sup> Rose Ullrich

### *Upcoming Youth and Young Adult Retreats*

- Mid-Winter Retreat for youth in grade 9–age 21 will be **February 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>** in Chaska, MN.
- Young Adult Retreat for age 18–30ish will be **February 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>** in Mt. Morris, WI.

### *Board of World Mission*



...that if you are looking for a way to serve over the holidays, the BWM is hosting an urban mission opportunity in Chicago **December 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>** for high school and college aged youth. This is the third year in a row that participants will be able to learn about urban poverty and homelessness while engaging in mission service. The cost is \$170 and includes all food, lodging, transportation and programming once you arrive in Chicago. For more information and to register email her at [johannadertinger@gmail.com](mailto:johannadertinger@gmail.com).

Can't travel but want to support this effort? Contact [justin@moravianmission.org](mailto:justin@moravianmission.org) to find out ways to donate or support this effort!

### *Convo 2017*



Moravian Youth Convo will be held on **July 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>** in Washington, DC. It is an interprovincial gathering of youth for the purpose of building community, spiritual formation, mission engagement, and fellowship. Participants must have completed grade 9 through grade 12 in 2017. Chaperones must be at least 21 years old and be approved by the Convo Planning Committee. Total participant cost is \$800 and total chaperone cost is \$650. For more information and registration forms, go to [www.moravian.org/?p=9031](http://www.moravian.org/?p=9031).

### *From the Moravian Ministries Foundation*

After sixteen and a half years of service to the Moravian Ministries Foundation, **Chi-Chi**

**Messick** will retire on December 31<sup>st</sup>. We invited Chi-Chi to reflect on her time with the Foundation; she had this to say:

“I’ve said many times that my job is the very best job anyone could have. It’s hard to believe sixteen and a half years have passed so quickly and that I still love what I do, and look forward to each and every day. Working at the Foundation has given me so many opportunities and enabled me to do things I never thought I would or could do. I’ve been privileged to travel to churches in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, New Jersey, and New York, as well as all the churches in Canada. I’ve visited Camp Hope, Van Es, Laurel Ridge, and Mt. Morris, and several retirement communities including Auburn Care, Moravian Manor, Moravian Village, and Moravian Hall Square. I’ve assisted agencies like the Unity Women’s Desk, Sunnyside Ministries, Moravian Open Door, the Board of World Mission, and the Moravian Music Foundation. As my tenure comes to an end, I have fond memories of the warm welcome and extraordinary hospitality I’ve found all over our North American Moravian World. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your work and the work of our beloved Church.”

Please join us in thanking Chi-Chi for her years of dedication to the Moravian Church and in wishing her well in retirement.

The Foundation is pleased to share the position description for Director for Gratitude and Generosity; this per-son's primary role will be to oversee our planned giving service. To view the job description and learn how to apply, please visit this link:

[www.mmfa.info/file/directorforgratitudeandgenerositypdf](http://www.mmfa.info/file/directorforgratitudeandgenerositypdf)

### *From the IBOC Store*

The Moravian Church in America's Interprovincial Board of Communication Store is stocked and ready to go with holiday favorites and new items, too! Here are just a few of the new items we have for this holiday season:

**Moravian Essentials Cafe Mug** New for 2016! Featuring the Moravian Seal on one side and "God Creates, God Redeems, God Blesses/We Respond In Faith, Hope and Love" — the core Moravian Essentials — on the other. This 13 oz. black matte-finish mug with bright blue gloss interior is perfect for your favorite hot beverage. Dishwasher and microwave safe. \$9.00 ea.

**Images of the Moravian Church 2017 Wall Calendar** This unique 12-month wall calendar for 2017 features full-page photos depicting Moravian traditions, events and locations. The calendar pages include key Moravian festival days, like John Hus Festival (July 6), August 13th Festival and Festival of Christ the Chief Elder (Nov. 13), along with major US and Canada holidays. The coil-bound calendar opens to 11" wide x 17" tall and is printed on 100 lb. matte-finish card stock that's easy to write on. They are \$12.00 ea. Discounts available for quantity purchases.

**Moravian Seal Ornaments** New for 2016! This beautiful, folded-fabric ornament will adorn your home at Christmas time or all through the year. Handmade by members of the Schoeneck Moravian church in Nazareth, Pa., this lightweight, 3" ball is available decorated in three styles, each featuring the Moravian Seal. \$20.00 ea. See our online store or call for more information.

**Keeping Time: Dances to the Beat of a Different Drummer** The Rev. Brian Dixon from Lake Auburn Moravian Church in Minnesota reveals God's call and interaction in our lives in the form

of poetry, short stories, prayers, and benedictions. Keeping Time is an invitation to dance in the Spirit, to freely move within God's love, and to find the beat of our own faith. Each piece is influenced by the understanding of the Bible as something that has life and breath of its own. Brian gives life to some of the most well-known stories of the Bible in a way that relates to us today. Within this volume are works of heart and spirit, soulfully composed as prayerful works of imagination and praise. Paperback, 118 pages, \$12.95

**Watchwords for Congregations 2017** This file contains Watchwords pulled from the 2017 Moravian Daily Texts, formatted into cards for congregational use. Many Moravian congregations use these Watchwords as part of their New Year's services to offer their members a Watchword for the year. The downloadable file will be available Dec. 2. \$5.00

As always, we carry a wide range of Moravian books, histories, worship resources, music CDs and more. There's still time to order our special Christmas bulletin covers, the 2017 Moravian Daily Texts or the 2017 Moravian Church Desk Calendar and Plan Books. Orders placed by Dec. 15 should arrive in time for Christmas. Visit [www.store.moravian.org](http://www.store.moravian.org) to see our complete line-up or to place an order. You can also call Jill Bruckart at 610-867-7566, ext. 38 or e-mail [jill@mcnp.org](mailto:jill@mcnp.org) to order. And watch for our new online store, launching soon! Thanks for supporting our communication ministry.

### *Tour the Holy Land*

The Rev. Sanette Francis and the Rt. Rev. Hopeton Clennon are organizing a Moravian pilgrimage to the Holy Land through Education Opportunities Tours **January 3<sup>rd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018** (please note that this is in 2018, not 2017). The price starts at \$2,998 and includes roundtrip international airfare from New York Kennedy airport, deluxe motor coaches, first class hotels, and daily buffet breakfast and dinner. You may register online at [www.moraviantour.com](http://www.moraviantour.com).

### *Conversations on Identity, Purpose, and Organization*

Members of the Identity, Purpose, and Organization (IPO) Task Force will be coming to a church near you! In the winter and spring of 2017, you will have the opportunity to learn more about IPO and offer your input and good ideas about who we are, what God is calling us to do and be, and how to organize ourselves to most effectively share God's love with the people around us. Stay tuned for the schedule coming out soon.

### *ELCA Credit Union*

Our Provincial President, Betsy Miller, represents both the Southern and Northern Provinces at the semiannual meeting of the Church Council (PEC meeting) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). At its recent meeting, Betsy brought greetings and observed their deliberations as they discussed social statements, policies, and future directions. In addition, we learned that as full communion partners, all Moravians (lay and clergy) living in the USA are eligible to join the newly formed ELCA Federal Credit Union. To learn more, visit [www.elcafcu.org](http://www.elcafcu.org).